

Due to longer than expected processing times, U.S. citizens traveling to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda who have applied for but have not yet received their passports can, according to the Department of State, temporarily travel to and from the United States by air with a government issued photo identification and Department of State official proof of application for a passport through September 30, 2007.

This accommodation does not affect entry requirements to other countries. Americans traveling to a country that requires passports must still present those documents.

Travelers who have not applied for a passport should not expect to be accommodated.

Adults must present:

- A government-issued photo identification
- An official proof of application from the U.S. Department of State. Click here for the [official proof of application form](#).

Children under the age of 16 traveling with their parents or legal guardian must have:

- The child's proof of application. Click here for the [official proof of application form](#).

NOTE:

- The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), which requires passports for Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico and Bermuda, was mandated by Congress in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 to strengthen border security and facilitate entry into the United States for citizens and legitimate international visitors.
- WHTI requirements for air travel took effect on January 23, 2007.
- As early as January 2008, the Departments will begin to implement WHTI at land and sea ports of entry.
- Travel document security remains a top priority for the U.S. Government. Both the 9/11 Commission and the U.S. Congress urged strengthening of travel documents to prevent entry of terrorists across our borders, reduce use of fraudulent documents, and speed up entry procedures.

### APPLYING FOR A PASSPORT

Passports are obtained through the Passport Services Division of the [Department of State](#)

. Through your local passport acceptance agent, you can apply for a new passport, renew your old one, or do any of a number of things, including replacing a lost, stolen, or damaged passport, or adding new pages to your existing book. You should be aware that as of June 2007, the State Department is reporting a significant backlog in passport applications.

If you have had trouble securing services regarding a passport issue, Congresswoman Moore's office may be able to assist you in expediting the process if you are having difficulties obtaining your passport. Please call the district office for further assistance at (414) 297-1140.

Check the status of your application: You can [check the status of your application online](#) .

Currently, it is taking 7-10 days for applications to be tracked online, less if you paid for Expedited Service and sent your application via overnight delivery. Please allow that much time before contacting us to check on your application. Currently, Expedite Service takes 2-3 weeks to receive your passport from the date you applied. It may take longer for customers who apply for a renewal by mail without "Expedite" marked on the mailing envelope. If you haven't received your passport and are traveling within the next 7 days, please call or email the [National Passport Information Center](#).

**New Application for a U.S. Passport:** To obtain a passport for the first time, you need to go in person to one of over [8,000 passport acceptance facilities](#) located throughout the United States with two photographs of yourself, proof of U.S. citizenship, and a valid form of photo identification such as a driver's license. There are also [13 regional passport agencies](#), and 1 Gateway City Agency, which serve customers who are traveling within 2 weeks (14 days), or who need foreign visas for travel. Appointments are required in such cases.

You'll need to apply in person if you are applying for a U.S. passport for the first time: if your expired U.S. passport is not in your possession; if your previous U.S. passport has expired and was issued more than 15 years ago; if your previous U.S. passport was issued when you were under age 16; or if your currently valid U.S. passport has been lost or stolen.

### Renewal of a U.S. Passport:

You can renew by mail if: Your most recent passport is available to submit and it is not damaged; you received the passport within the past 15 years; you were over age 16 when it was issued; you still have the same name, or can legally document your name change. You can get a passport renewal application form by downloading it by clicking on: [Renewing your passport.](#)

If your passport has been, altered or damaged, you cannot apply by mail. You must apply in person.

### Apply Early:

The National Passport Processing Center is busy as Americans plan for summer trips. The best advice for when to apply is, "Apply Early!" Or even "now" if you might be checking out deals on airfare or hotels outside the U.S. If you are traveling or need your passport in order to get a visa within the next 2 weeks, please call the [National Passport Information Center](#) or use the link below to check the status of your application online.

### Traveling Overseas:

When you obtain your passport, you must check with the country or countries you'll be visiting to determine whether or not you'll need a visa. A visa is permission from a country to cross their borders and comes in the form of a page inserted in your U.S. Passport. You usually have to mail your passport to the Embassy or Consulate of the country you'll be visiting, so allow plenty of time to accomplish this.

Also, check the State Department website for [travel warnings](#) and consular information sheets that provide helpful information about the country you plan on visiting. The [State Department services](#) website also contains very comprehensive information on all the services it provides both stateside and abroad. This includes crisis assistance for U.S. Citizens living or traveling abroad and various travel publications available on-line.

American Embassies and Consulates General:

Many U.S. Diplomatic Missions abroad have information on-line. For those that don't, check the [State Department's Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts](#) for addresses, and phone and fax numbers for U.S. Embassies and Consulates throughout the world.

### SAFE TRAVELS: TOP TEN PASSPORT TIPS

1. Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and visas, if required. Also, before you go, fill in the emergency information page of your passport!
2. Read the Consular Information Sheets (and Public Announcements or [Travel Warnings](#) , if applicable) for the countries you plan to visit.
3. Familiarize yourself with local laws and customs of the countries to which you are traveling. Remember, the U.S. Constitution does not follow you! While in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws.
4. Make 2 copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with friends or relatives. Carry the other with you in a separate place from your passport.
5. Leave a copy of your itinerary with family or friends at home so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
6. Do not leave your luggage unattended in public areas. Do not accept packages from strangers.
7. Prior to your departure, you should register with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate through the State Department's travel registration website . Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency. In accordance with the Privacy Act, information on your welfare and whereabouts may not be released without your express authorization. Remember to leave a detailed itinerary and the numbers or copies of your passport or other citizenship documents with a friend or relative in the United States.
8. To avoid being a target of crime, try not to wear conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry and do not carry excessive amounts of money or unnecessary credit cards.
9. In order to avoid violating local laws, deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques.
10. If you get into trouble, contact the nearest U.S. embassy.

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